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THE SEASON'S CARPETINGS.

By Mrs. S. A. BROCK PUTNAM.



he question of floor coverings, with the pleasing of the eye in consideration, is one that has no small share in the satisfaction or the discontent of the householder, in whose mind the art-idea has place; or in which the impulse of taste is active. Ill accordance may be submitted to because of conditions that possibly may, or can not be avoided; but there is a moral side even in house-furnishing, and elements of happiness in still life objects, which ought not to be ignored, if we would make domestic life practically agreeable.

It is the custom of people blessed with wealth, especially in the cities, when coming into possession of a new house, to turn the house over to decorators and furnishers; assured, if a *carte blanche* be allowed for the object, that there will be little that may be demanded when the work is completed. This is very well, as far as a *coup d'oeil* may be concerned, but in most cases where the details of fitting up a house is left alone to the decorator and furnisher, there is lacking the individuality of taste, if not of appointments, which gives to the house the home character—the exclusive principle which has so great a part in rendering domestic surroundings delightful. The decorator and furnisher are invaluable, but to a satisfactory conclusion of the whole matter, there must be frequent conferences and consultations both with the master and mistress with a view to the expression of individual taste in the household belongings. Almost any carpet, it is true, is more or less comfortable in effect; but some carpets, it is well known, are an offence to aesthetic ideas. Happily, however, in the skill which has been attained in the use of the dyes and textures which enter into carpetings, all *disagreements* understood, violations of harmony or taste may be obviated. And not in all cases at an alarming expense. Wiltons and Axminsters may be made to give way to body Brussels in carpetings, without any sacrifice of charm; and an ingrain is far from homely if selected judiciously and with due regard to accompanying fittings and furnishings. In the choice of a carpet, the tinting of the wall must be borne in mind, or in the decoration of the wall the carpet should be remembered. When the ground color of the carpet and the wall decoration harmonize in color and tone, the effect is always agreeable; or a very charming effect may be produced by harmony of contrast. Carpeting in tones of red is in great favor in the palaces in Europe; several of the state rooms in Windsor Castle have red carpets; and the writer has in mind a sumptuous drawing room in an American house, of which the walls were hung with red flock paper, the carpet red, and the hangings and upholstery a clear tone of *ciel* blue. Again there is in mind a delightful library, the walls of which are hung in French leather paper, in a set design of green and mastic color outlined with gold, the body Brussels carpet showing a design of green and warm figures in maroon and red on mastic ground, with the hangings to match, and the lounge and chairs upholstered in maroon leather—these two rooms illustrating the harmony of contrast, as well as that which exists in accord.

INGRAINS.

The ingrain carpetings of this season follow the prevailing taste of soft colors and inconspicuous designs. They are shown in deep cream, *écru*, and pale wood colored groundings, sage and pale olive greens, pale old rose, terra cotta and pearl, relieved with designs in small figures of a deeper tone of the self-color; or if in groundings of the deeper tone, the design is in a distinctly pale tone of the self color. In some cases the design is of a delicate vine which wanders in a tangle all over the surface, the blossoms and leaves being small and not very sharply defined. Other patterns are in a confusion of scrolls, and some are in a confusion of small shells. Ingrain carpetings of good quality range in price from about 75 to 85 cents per yard.

Varying the piece, carpetings employed for covering entire floors, there are ingrain squares, (known, as in carpetings of richer weaves, as "art squares"). These squares are in designs similar to the piece goods, with deep borderings; or they are in plain centres, with the deep borders. There is much elaboration

of design in the borderings, both floriated and set figures being pleasingly introduced. Ingrain rugs or squares range in price from about \$5 to \$35, according to size and quality. They are much used in houses of simple furnishing, in dining-rooms, libraries and reception rooms; on polished wood floors, floors covered with Chinese matting, or filled out with "Durrie," or plain colored ingrain.

A heavier grade of the ingrain weave in carpeting is called "Ispahan." It is shown in plain colors, or very fine mixtures of color. It sells at from 75 to 85 cents per yard, is of very close and firm texture, and is useful and durable.

TAPESTRY BRUSSELS.

In the tapestry carpets of this season there is apparent a greater disposition to the use of colors than either in the ingrains or the more expensive grades of carpets. The designs, nevertheless, are generally small and not strikingly pronounced, incorporating the colors enumerated, brightened up in some instances with strong or definite colors. And some of the designs are similar to those in which the Ispahan carpets are shown. The best tapestry carpetings, twenty-seven inches in width, sell at from 75 to 85 cents per yard; and tapestry "art squares," with centres of simple design and rich borders, sell at from \$17 to \$35, according to size and quality. They find place usually in spare rooms, which have either polished floors, or are covered with Chinese matting.

BODY BRUSSELS.

In the choice of carpeting for the best service in general use, body Brussels is to be commended. It differs from the tapestry Brussels in having the wool carried through and through the warp, so that the colors are easily distinguished on the wrong side. It becomes a 3, 4, 5, and 6 frame texture, according as from 3 to 6 threads are thrown into the pile, which is close, and left uncut. The best designs are seen in body Brussels carpetings and when of fine quality they leave little to be demanded, either in the colors introduced, or the patterns in which they are woven. The body Brussels of this season are shown in many dainty and delightful designs, incorporating all the popular colors and tones of color. Many of the designs are of rare delicacy, exhibiting tangled vines and scroll effects, many being of rare richness, while the standard ideas of former seasons are retained. They retain well deserved popularity for their beauty and durability, as well as for the ease with which they are kept fresh and cleanly, finding place alike for elegance and utility in the drawing-room as well as in rooms of more common use.

Body Brussels squares follow the popular idea in the centre of simple design, with a gay border. The range in price for the piece carpeting is \$1.00 to \$1.50 per yard, according to quality, while the squares range from \$20 upward, according to quality and size.

VELVET CARPETS.

Velvet carpets are manufactured in the same manner as body Brussels, but from the fact of their having a cut pile, a greater quantity of thread is necessary in their manufacture. They are, however, the lightest and cheapest of carpetings with velvet pile. The designs are more pronounced and the colorings stronger than those of Moquettes, Wiltons or Axminsters, and in consequence velvet carpets are in great demand for hotels, steamboats, and places where much service is required. They sell at about \$1.75 per yard.

MOQUETTES.

The moquette has been accepted as the link between the less and the more expensive carpetings, and finds place in the rooms of highest ceremony. It is the next grade of carpeting to body Brussels where price is considered. The Moquette, like the Wilton, has a cut pile, but while heavier in effect than the Wilton, it is not of so close a texture, presenting a plush rather than a velvet surface, and showing more plainly than the Wilton the character of its manufacture. Exceptionally charming designs have been brought out this season. Patterns are produced in every tone of color now devoted to carpetings, and the most characteristic designs, representing delightful foliations and scrollwork. In a design the ground of which is deep cream color, scrolls in shades of brown, paling out to *écru*, interspersed with flowers, which warm up to a vivid old rose, with others having delightful tones of peacock or turquoise blue. In every piece placed under inspection there is everything in design and color to gratify the most aesthetic fancy. The

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

moquette carpetings range in price from \$1.35 to \$1.50 per yard. Borders are woven to match the designs, and art squares vary all over carpets.

GOBELIN.

A new manufacture in carpets is called the Gobelin, but this term hardly expresses the character of the texture, which more nearly resembles the moquette than any other grade of carpet, but is of a heavier and deeper pile, and consequently handsomer and more valuable. It sells at \$1.65 to \$1.75 per yard, and repeats the designs and colorings of the moquettes.

WILTONS AND AXMINSTERS.

The Wilton, like the moquette, is devoted to the most elegant use in the household, covering the floors of drawing-rooms, parlors, boudoirs, as well as rooms of less exclusive use. By reason of closer texture, and having the pile more firmly embedded in the warp, the Wilton carpet is unquestionably more durable than the moquette, although hardly handsomer in appearance. In Wiltons and Axminster carpets we reach grades that find place next to the Aubusson in richness and elegance. Peculiar importance attaches to the Bigelow Wiltons and Axminsters, which are manufactured at Clinton, Mass. The designs and range of colorings are the most artistic that can be produced in carpetings. There is great indulgence in colors, the grounds being extremely delicate for patterns intended for drawing-rooms or dainty bed-chambers, while the Wiltons for halls and stairways are in designs of stronger colors, on groundings of dark rich colors.

The highest grade, as well as the most expensive of carpetings is the Axminster. In general effect the Axminster carpet closely resembles the moquette, while it is much heavier and of deeper pile and much more durable for floor covering, and therefore more valuable. It is used for the most sumptuous purposes, and is characterized by especially fine designs and colors. The fancy is for groundings of neutral tints and delicate tones, with artistic conventionalized designs that can be more readily imagined than accurately described. Wiltons sell from \$2.25 to \$2.75 per yard. Wilton rugs, with centre of simple design and rich border, sell from \$35 to \$75. The domestic Axminster carpets sell from \$1.50 to \$1.75 per yard. The imported Scotch Axminsters have come out not only in regular width of 27 inches, but in solid pieces of width sufficient to fill a room of very large size. They appear in both plain and figured designs in dainty groundings, relieved with delicate colors, and sell from \$2.50 to \$5.50 per yard, and when in the solid piece at about \$7.50 per square yard.

RUGS.

The line of rugs, when those of Oriental manufacture are included, seems almost endless, and even excluding those from the East, a very extended list is manufactured, besides the art squares already mentioned, all the carpetings referred to having rugs as a compliment of the manufacture. These rugs, according to size and quality, range in price from \$1.25 up to about \$6.00 for the smaller sizes. Moquette rugs of handsome design sell for \$5.00. Byzantine rugs, in which are reproduced Turkish designs and colors, sell according to size, from \$1.75.

SMYRNA RUGS.

The Philadelphia Saracen or reversible Smyrna rugs, in which Oriental fancies in design and color are produced, range from the small foot mat, to be laid in front of a dressing cabinet, to large carpets covering the entire room. The price ranges from \$1.50 to \$70. It cannot be said that these imitations of the Smyrna rugs at all equal the genuine productions of the Smyrna looms, but hardly too much can be said in commending them when their richness of character and durability are compared with their cheapness of price.

JAPANESE JUTE RUGS.

Japanese jute rugs must be regarded as curious, or stylish, rather than handsome and tasteful, and are produced in conventional colors and designs peculiar to Japanese art. They are effected by many ladies who like them because of their quaintness, as well as cheapness, for they sell from \$1.75 to \$20, in proportion to size.

BERLIN RUGS.

The connecting link between the real Oriental carpet and Occidental carpeting is the Berlin rug. This is one of the most splendid productions of the loom, the material being made after the same process as the Oriental rugs are made, only that

the work is done by machinery, instead of by hand. The softest and most harmonious of colorings are employed and the designs equal those of the Orient. These fine productions range in price from \$50 to \$150 each according to size.

RUGS IN GENERAL.

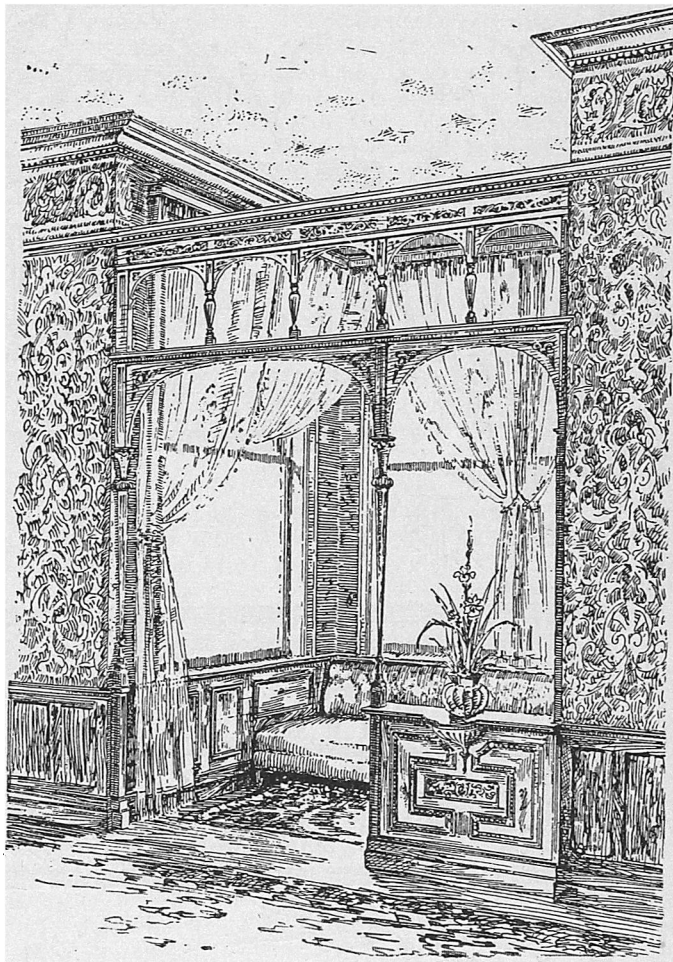
Among the novelties in rugs are the Albagh rugs, which are manufactured in plain colors only, but in all the popular colors, selling from \$10 to \$18 each. Tufted rugs are woven of the waste of moquette carpetings. The Japanese goat rugs, with white centre and natural grey border, and vice versa, sell at \$20. Angora, when of good quality, sell at \$20 to \$25, and sheepskin rugs, according to size, sell at from \$3.00 to \$20.

LINOLEUMS.

Any reference to carpetings would be incomplete without mention of the floor coverings which find their way to the kitchen and laundry and the basement hall, and, in some instances to the dining-room and front hall. The linoleums of recent make have the coloring reaching quite through to the foundation of the material, a process far in advance of that which has only a painted surface. They are produced in parquetry designs, with very faithful reproductions of wood effects and colors, and while the painted linoleum may be bought at \$.75 per square yard, these later are held at \$2.00 per square yard.

THE DECORATION OF A SQUARE WINDOW.

THE accompanying sketch gives an idea of a unique nook formed by a square window with a screen of woodwork. There should be a low dado around the apartment, as well as around the window recess. As the idea of a square window suggests an effort to obtain more light in a room more or less



DESIGN FOR DECORATING A SQUARE WINDOW.

dark, it is natural to suppose that the wall-paper is yellow, which gives more light than any other color. The nook is supplied with a low divan, or window seat, and there is room for a writing table, if necessary. The woodwork screen gives a very decorative effect to the recess.